Who is my School Clinician?
Your School Clinician is the person who performed your assessment. They will be the person doing all of your individual, and monthly check-ins for the first year you are in the program. Any questions you have about counseling requirements should be directed to them.

What is a Substance Abuse Assessment?
The initial stage of your ICare program involves undergoing a substance abuse assessment conducted by a licensed School Clinician. At The Hill School, all of our Clinicians are specially trained and qualified to perform these evaluations. The assessment examines the nature and frequency of counseling required, taking into account your substance use history. The evaluation results can be shared with parents upon request, ensuring open and transparent communication. Additionally, both the student and parent will receive recommendations outlining the counseling requirements based on the assessment findings. This collaborative approach aims to provide comprehensive support throughout your ICare journey.

What is ICare group?
The group is a mix of educational and clinical information that addresses the continuum of substance use. Each student is at a different point in their relationship with substances. This group is designed to help you learn more about yourself and help you understand how substances impact your life. These sessions will serve as an avenue for individual self-reflection and activities revolving around identified topics of importance. You can expect a mix of classroom learning, large and small group discussions, and weekly reflection homework. Lastly, this group is about providing information that allows you to make the best decisions for yourself in a non-judgmental environment.

How often will I have to go to the group?
The duration of your participation in the group depends on your level of engagement and progress. The group sessions take place weekly on the assigned day. It is important to note that attending the group is a mandatory component of your ICare process, and you will continue attending until it is determined that you have actively engaged with the group and its material in a meaningful way. To ensure active participation, it is expected that you contribute verbally at least twice during each group session. If there is a lack of engagement or incomplete homework assignments, it may result in an extended duration of your involvement in the group. The length of time spent in the group may vary for each student based on their individual substance use evaluation. Some students may require a longer duration in the group to address their specific needs and make progress in their journey.

What kinds of things will we talk about in the group?
The group will cover various topics, with a primary focus on exploring your personal relationship with substances. These discussions will encompass self-exploration regarding excessive habits, concerns about addiction, factors that contribute to self-esteem, the impact of family and peer relationships, as well as strategies for addressing relapse thinking. Additionally, the content of the group sessions will delve into overcoming substance misuse and setting goals for positive change. You will explore alternatives to substance misuse, delve into the scientific aspects of alcohol and drug use, examine the benefits of making changes, and explore the benefits of choosing a sober curious lifestyle.
Is the information shared in the group confidential?
All information shared within the group remains strictly confidential. This means that we do not disclose any of the information to your parents, the Deans’ Office, your adviser, or any other individuals. However, it is important to note that if your substance use escalates and continues despite counseling efforts, it may be necessary to consider a higher level of care and make appropriate recommendations accordingly to the Medical Leave Committee.

Furthermore, it is essential to respect the confidentiality of other group members. If you disclose any information about another group member outside of the group setting, it will result in your removal from the group. Such behavior will also be reported to the Dean of Students as a failure to comply with the ICare recommendations. We emphasize the importance of maintaining a safe and confidential environment for all participants.

What is reported to the Deans’ Office?
We maintain communication with you solely to ensure your compliance with the ICare requirements. If you miss group sessions, fail to actively engage, or neglect to submit homework assignments, it is necessary for us to inform the Deans’ Office. This communication serves as a notification of non-compliance and may result in disciplinary actions from the school. It is important to clarify that the information you share within the group regarding your personal journey with substances is kept confidential and not shared with any external parties. Once your counseling requirements are completed the Director of Counseling will notify the Dean of Students.

However, if your treatment requires a higher level of care, due to continued use, it will be essential to have discussions with your counselor, parents, and the medical leave committee to explore appropriate options.

What does a higher level of care mean?
At The Hill School, we are fortunate to have a team of four licensed counselors, each with their own unique expertise. Among our counselors, the Director of Counseling is a Licensed Addictions Therapist. This diverse expertise enables us to effectively assess your needs and recommend an appropriate level of treatment if you are using substances. The highest level of treatment we can provide within our counseling services is individual sessions once a week, along with one group session. This comprehensive approach allows for personalized support and intervention. If substance use continues despite counseling efforts, medical leave from the school may be necessary to seek additional treatment options. This decision is made with your well-being in mind.

What should or can I share in the group?
Your comfort and well-being are of utmost importance to us, and we want to assure you that you will never be compelled to share anything that makes you uncomfortable. However, it is crucial to inform you that as mandated reporters, we have a legal obligation to report any information shared that involves sexual assault, physical or sexual abuse, or harm to yourself or others. This is done with the intention of ensuring the safety and welfare of everyone involved. You are encouraged to openly express your thoughts, feelings, and reactions to the material you are learning during the program. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of others, we kindly request that you use general terms (such as “my friend”) instead of using actual names when referring to individuals who may also attend The Hill School. Our aim is to create a supportive and non-judgmental environment where you feel comfortable sharing and growing throughout the program.
What if I miss a group or individual session?
You are allowed to have one missed group or individual session. Any additional sessions will be reported to the Dean of Students.

How do I complete the group?
Participate, engage, turn in homework, and complete prevention programs.

Will my parents be involved in this process?
Yes. All parents are sent ICare counseling recommendations. Additionally, for any student who is required to take the IMPACT Cannabis program, the parent will be sent an invite to optionally participate in the parent version of this program. Lastly, if a student is deemed to need a higher level of care, this recommendation will be discussed with the parent through the medical leave process.

What if I have a positive drug test?
All drug testing is operated by the Medical Director and the Dean’s Office. If you have a positive drug test you will be notified by the Dean of Students.

Who pays for the drug tests and how often do I take them?
All drug testing is paid for by the student. The Deans’ Office and Medical Director determine the frequency of testing.

What does it mean to petition to “step down” in ICare?
After one year, you can petition the Dean of Students to “step down” you in your I Care Program. You will have to complete all your counseling requirements and had no positive drug tests. If you are approved, the drug testing portion of the program will end, however, you remain in ICare until your graduation.

What if I want to continue counseling after ICare group is over?
Just let your School Clinician know and they will be happy to support you further.